

you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vard Johnson, then Senator DeCamp, then Senator Hall and Senator Landis.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I rise in opposition to Senator Beutler's amendment. This bill, as far as I'm concerned, should be read and voted on. We vote it up or we vote it down. Now Senator Warner has suggested that I may have the Marie Antoinette approach to public employees, that is to let them eat cake when they are outside the gates indicating starvation. The truth of the matter is that public employees do relatively well. They are not starved, they are relatively well paid and they are very well protected, they are very well protected in the employment relationship. What is happening here is we are providing another protection for public employees under the guise of getting information. Senator Warner specifically talks about many instances that he has received private information from public employees that has been helpful to him. Well I, too, have received private information from public employees, and every time I have simply taken the information and if I decided to act upon it I have done so, protecting the confidence of the public employee because that is the way it is in human society. I do not think that we need to have any built-in legal protections for public employees who give information to people they think should have the information. I think to build that protection in simply provides a new panoply of rights that can be used for reasons totally different from the whistle-blowing, the rooting out of fraud, the rooting out of gross mismanagement concept. I think in the community of people one relies very simply on people understanding relationships, people understanding needs for confidentiality, people being protective and solicitous of others. This bill provides additional rights to an already long, long list of job protection provisions of rights, fringe benefits, et cetera. I don't think it is necessary. I think the Beutler amendment should be defeated, the bill read and defeated.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President, it is obvious this bill is going to pass and it is obvious we are going to move into 20,000 public employees, basically, having a tenure system